

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 103849

LIMDIS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, VS

SUBJECT: FRANCO-PRG NEGOTIATIONS

REF: PARIS 11937

1. WE ARE FOLLOWING CLOSELY THE REPORTS OF GOF DISCUSSIONS WITH PRG REPRESENTATIVES RELATIVE TO THE STATUS OF THE PRG OFFICE IN PARIS. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE QUAI COMMENTS REPORTED REFTEL ARE INTERESTING AND USEFUL. AS EMBASSY PARIS HAS CORRECTLY POINTED OUT TO THE GOF, OUR PRINCIPAL CONCERN IS THAT ANY CHANGE IN THE OFFICIAL FRENCH TREATMENT OF THE SO-CALLED PRG WILL BE EXPLOITED BY THE COMMUNISTS TO ENHANCE THE INTERNATIONAL STANDING OF THE PRG AS A "RIVAL" OF THE GVN AND THUS ADVANCE HANOI'S STRATEGY OF "THREE VIET-NAMS." FROM THIS STANDPOINT, ANY IMPROVEMENT IN THE TREATMENT ACCORDED BY THE GOF TO SOUTH VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST REPRESENTATIVES IN PARIS WILL TEND TO MASK THE PRG'S SATELLITE STATUS AND MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR A TRUE BALANCE OF FORCES TO BE ESTABLISHED IN INDOCHINA. AS

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EMBASSY PARIS KNOWS, AND AS THE GOF MUST ALSO REALIZE,

HANOI'S EFFORTS TO ENHANCE THE INTERNATIONAL STANDING OF THE PRG ARE DESIGNED TO COMPENSATE FOR THE WEAKNESS OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS IN SOUTH VIET-NAM AND TO CONCEAL THE TIGHT CONTROL EXERCISED BY HANOI OVER ITS PRG APPENDAGE.

2. FOR SAIGON: IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE A REPORT ON GOF-GVN DISCUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT IN SAIGON AND ON THE CURRENT GVN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE ANTICIPATED CHANGE IN GOF-PRG RELATIONS. HAVE THE FRENCH BEEN ANY MORE SPECIFIC IN THEIR COMMENTS TO THE GVN THAN TO US? RUSH

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